

SELFRIDGE FIELD, BUILDING NOS. 1412, 1434
(Standard Aircraft Refueling System Multiple
Outlet Hydrant Type)
(Medium Bombers, 6 Tank Operating Pump House
Enclosed Type)
(Hydrant Fuel Building)
Castle Ave. west of West Ramp
Mt. Clemens Vicinity
Macomb County
Michigan

HAER No. MI-116-QQ

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Great Lakes Systems Office
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102-2571

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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SELFRIDGE FIELD, HAER No. MI-116-QQ
BUILDING #1412, #1434,
(STANDARD AIRCRAFT REFUELING SYSTEM MULTIPLE OUTLET HYDRANT TYPE)
(MEDIUM BOMBERS, SIX TANK, OPERATING PUMPHOUSE ENCLOSED TYPE)
(Hydrant Fuel Building)

I. INTRODUCTION

Location: South of North Perimeter Road, west of West Ramp
Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mt. Clemens vicinity,
Macomb County, Michigan

Quad\UTM: U.S.G.S. Mt. Clemens East Quadrangle, Universal
Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17.348680.4720320
(#1412); 17.348650.4719920 (#1434)

Date of Construction: 1959

Present Owner: Air National Guard
3500 Fetchet Avenue
Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland 20762

Significance: Buildings #1412 and #1434 are utilitarian buildings whose role was essential in the operation of the SAC district, which occupies a distinct district at Selfridge that was self contained and isolated from the rest of the base for functional and security reasons. The Pump Houses served an integral role in the SAC capability, providing "hot" refueling capability that permitted rapid refueling of aircraft in times of external threat to facilitate successful completion of the base's mission. They were thus directly involved in Cold War military operations and readiness, and the SAC refueling mission. But the significance of the buildings is best defined as a contributing structure to the entire SAC installation. As a regional SAC refueling center, responsible for protection of the Great Lakes region, the SAC district was of exceptional importance in national defense strategy.

Historian: William Rutter, Midwest Environmental Consultants, May, 1996

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Buildings #1412, #1434
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II. HISTORY

Buildings #1412 and #1434 were erected in 1959 at a cost of \$52,400 for construction and equipment from plans by J.F. Pritchard & Co., Architects-Engineers of Kansas City, Missouri, for the Air Force Air Defense Command.¹ Building #1412 and Building #1434 are identical. These plans were modified slightly to include Deluge Showers and Eye Washers. The building functioned to assist in refueling SAC aircraft on the west ramp in as rapid a manner as possible. Pipelines from large storage tanks at the west side of the base connected to this structure, which then piped the fuel from underground storage tanks beneath it to fuel caddies on the ramp that counted fuel volume and filtered the fuel as it was dispensed to SAC jets. The pumphouses supported the SAC refueling wing operations at the base until SAC ceased operations at Selfridge in 1965. During the Cold War, the 4045th and 500th Air Refueling Wings had the mission of constant readiness to respond to an alert and refuel SAC bombers on during alert and on scheduled missions.

III. DESCRIPTION

¹Original construction plans on file, Selfridge Base Museum and Base Civil Engineers Office

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This building is a rectangular plan, 31 foot 4 inch wide by 60 foot deep, single-story, concrete block structure shielded by a low pitch gabled concrete reinforced roof. All windows are steel frame wire mesh sash with masonry lintels and sills. Its built up pitch and gravel roof displays wide eaves shielding warning air horns and a roof is broken by an air intake near its northern edge, an exhaust blower near its southern end and a series of six scuttle openings in two rows in between. The piercing pattern of the primary (east) elevation that faces the west ramp consists solely of a central double steel pedestrian entrance door with four lights, although three fuel pipes 6 inches to 8 inches in diameter exit the building on each side of the doors and angle below the concrete apron to the west ramp. Four air horns are positioned in a row under the wide building eaves and a Deluge Shower Eye Wash facility is also positioned along the facade. The south elevation consists of five bays formed by three double steel sash windows and a steel pedestrian entry door flanked by a single steel sash window at the southwest corner. The west elevation is pierced only by a single steel pedestrian entry at the northwest corner, while the north elevation is a mirror image of the south elevation.

The interior is consumed almost entirely by the Pump Room that is separated

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by a masonry wall from the 8 foot 8 inch wide Control Room that occupies the west end of the building. Circuit breaker panels and an observation window are located on the wall separating the office from the pumphouse. Corps of Engineers U.S. Army vertical turbine pumps (300 gallon per minute capacity) produced by the Johnston Pump Company of Pasadena California are located on raised concrete pedestals, powered by motors produced by U.S. Electrical Motors Incorporated of Milford, Connecticut with filter apparatus labeled "Uni-pass, Bowser Filter-Separator" produced by Bowser, Inc. Engineers and Manufacturers Liquid Control Systems, of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Automatic tank gauges on the apparatus are manufactured by the Shand and Jurs Company of Berkeley, California. These buildings retain their exterior and interior structural integrity and are little altered from date of construction.

IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

Anonymous, Brief History of Selfridge Air Force Base, 1917-1960, unpublished ms., Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 1960.

Narducci, Henry M., SAC and the Alert Program: A Brief History, Office of the Historian, Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, 1988.

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Nigro, Louis, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, An Unofficial History, unpublished ms., Public Information Office, Selfridge ANG Base, Michigan, 1977.

B. PLANS

Construction drawing, dated November 19, 1954, J.F. Pritchard and Company, Kansas City, Missouri, in possession of Selfridge Base Museum, Mt. Clemens, Michigan. Operating Pumphouse, Architectural Plans and Elevations, Sheet 7 Drawing No. 78-24-01, SF5/1164.

Construction drawing, dated November 19, 1954, J.F. Pritchard and Company, Kansas City, Missouri, in possession of Selfridge Base Museum, Mt. Clemens, Michigan. Operating Pumphouse, Architectural Sections and Details, Sheet 8 Drawing No. 78-24-01, SF5/1165.

C. INTERVIEWS

Eric Reeve, Selfridge Environmental Management, October 12, 1995

Colonel Robert Stone (Ret.), Curator, Selfridge Base Museum, October 13, 1995